

its heart atters

s are clamoring to influence decisions
letter of the constitutional law.
justice for the poor be the same as the
men and equal for all races. Since
on as to when human life begins and
tion, the issue does not belong in a

s just goals can never be achieved by
f goals will be rendered less worthy if
e to achieve it.
good judge is that he/she should judge
others and be of good character. They
le leaving room for as much
They should not be influenced by

ake of this nation, I hope not.

A.J. KRAVITIN, Columbus

in the letters section from Larry Martin
edger for its coverage of Dr. Tidwell
patriotic undertakings here in
name is also Larry Martin and I live in
ajor pharmaceutical company and in
iews of the Larry Martin of Columbus.
ae with the other Larry Martin and

Past time for real leadership

For some time now we have seen the barroom brawl that is the Phenix City Fire Department played out on the pages of this and other newspapers, in public meetings and behind closed doors. Those actually involved have been living it for longer than that.

In a nutshell, it's a mess. Management and a large faction of labor are practically not speaking to each other, and when they do, they use language their mothers would not appreciate.

Some firefighters claim that their work-related complaints are met with threats to alter their work hours, or worse. Management has eliminated what's called "swap time," a practice common to fire departments which allows firefighters to alter their schedules to pursue education or a second job.

Meanwhile, leaders in the department say they're only doing what's best for all, and if it's not anyone's cup of tea, they can look elsewhere for work.

This firehouse Hatfield and McCoy routine has to stop. It is time for someone in Phenix City to step forward and show some leadership.

And, just for the record:

- Saying, "Love it or leave it," is not leadership.
- Neither is incessant griping.

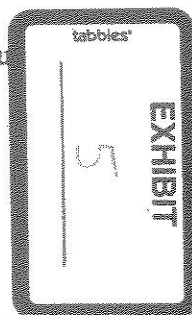
This should not need saying, but apparently it does. Firefighting is one of the most essential missions in municipal government. It demands teamwork and trust at a level few jobs require; and a lack of those things can be fatal — literally. That fatality could be a firefighter or a taxpaying citizen.

So far, thank God, we have not heard of any catastrophes stemming from this feud, but the situation is only getting worse.

Eventually, we're going to see someone step up and fix this situation. We hope it is before something terrible happens.

Audit makes sense

Muscogee County School Superintendent John Phillips wants an outside agency to audit the school district's Plant Services Department.



Bush isn't obligated to speak

Letters

Cindy Sheehan has had her audience with the president. He is under no further obligation to be at her beck and call. She is starting to look very shrewish.

I have a son in the armed forces and if he should die in the service to his country, I would not disgrace his memory by ranting at whomever is our president.

RICHARD A. VALENTINE, Phenix City

Just answer the mother's question

Cindy Sheehan has a simple question. George Bush gave a speech in which he said that the soldiers recently blown up in Iraq died for a "noble cause." She wants him to tell her what the "noble cause" is.

The rest of us want Bush to explain how it is that Americans are still dying more than two years after the liberation of Iraq, 14 months after the sovereignty "handover," and seven months after their elections.

We want to know why it was that the "intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy" of going to war in Iraq some eight months before the invasion.

We want to know why Halliburton has been awarded billion dollar contracts to build permanent military bases in Iraq.

We want to know why the U.S. turned down the offers of peacekeeping troops from our allies - including Jordan - and from the U.N., which would have got us out of Iraq in 2003, but which would have left security in place to protect the Iraqi people.

We want to know why troops and support aircraft were taken from Tora Bora region of Afghanistan, where they had Osama bin Laden trapped or contained, and sent to areas near Iraq to prepare for the invasion and hunt for Saddam.

We want to know why the top Republican leadership won't admit what the military in Iraq has already said publicly in June of 2005: That "this insurgency is not going to be settled,

the terrorists and the terrorism in Iraq is not going to be settled, through military options or military operations. It's going to be settled in the political process." — Brig. Gen. Donald Alston, the chief U.S. military spokesman in Iraq.

"We can't kill them all. When I kill one I create three." — Lt. Col. Frederick P. Wellman, who works with the task force overseeing the training of Iraqi security troops.

JAMES FINKELSTEIN, Albany, Ga.

Hugley's answer is not acceptable

I read a letter in Saturday's Ledger-Enquirer questioning the progress of the new animal shelter. I recently contacted our city manager concerning this same matter. The following is his reply dated July 28, 2005:

"The committee has hired an architect, drafted bid documents and received bids. Unfortunately the bids came in over budget. They will value engineer to get the cost down and within budget or the committee will continue to raise private dollars and build the facility as designed." Isaiah Hugley

What he meant to say: "We have drug our feet and finally hired an architect, drafted bid documents and received bids. Of course the bids came in over budget, what did you expect? They will value down (fancy words for, cut out some items), that were approved by the voters, to get the cost down.

Surely you don't expect us to follow through with what we promise. Or the committee will continue to raise private funds, (funds already supplied in good faith by the taxpayers) and build the facility as designed."

In other words, it's not our fault if you

don't get what you want. This is the same reasoning that defeated the city manager and the mayor - don't get it.

I replied to Mr. Hugley that this was not acceptable. Other items on the SPLOST, for a few of the "special" have been taken care of, regardless of cost. If we continue to accept the "scratch yours" mentality coming from the Government Center, we deserve what we get.

GERALD BEDGOOD,

Firefighter letter was off base

It is evident that the gentleman Seale who wrote the letter concerning the malcontent of the Phenix City firefighters is ignorant of the duties firefighters perform.

When you choose this profession go through a rigorous training process before becoming a firefighter. You constantly training and attending classes on duty and off duty. There is such thing as eight hours sleep time. You answer calls all through the night just as you do in the day.

I would challenge this writer who thinks it is so easy to put on a war coat and pants in the hot summer to build a huge fire and then go stand for 30 minutes to an hour. I would further challenge him to put on his warmest clothes on a cold winter night go outside soak himself with a hose and stay outside for a few hours.

When a firefighters shift is scheduled for a family birthday, anniversary or holiday he is on duty and has to make these.

Many firefighters do have second jobs as he claims, but this is due to the pay. And these jobs are secondary fire service, because all firefighters are on 24 hours call seven days a week.

This gentleman says hats off to Mr. Roberts. If he should have an emergency situation maybe he should call Mr. Roberts.

WAYNE POOLE, S.

Firefighters earn respect Letters

This is in response to the letter about firefighters "crying" about their 24-hour shifts.

First of all, firefighters love their 24-hour shifts and have not complained about that.

Second, firefighters do not get eight hours of sleep time, as the letter claimed. The reality is they respond to calls for help the whole 24-hour shift. Many times, they get only a limited amount of actual sleep time. If you're going to attack firefighters, tread lightly and at least get your facts straight, because as member of this community, I will tell you, we will stand behind our firefighters.

I think it is a disgrace that a Phenix City building inspector, and a direct subordinate of Bubba Roberts, would kiss up in the paper by trying to trash our community's heroes, whom we love and respect! There is plenty of time to play kiss-up to Mr. Roberts at work.

Also, if you think that being a firefighter is such a good gig and you are man enough for the challenge, then fill out an application. Remember this, though: Firefighters risk their lives for people they don't even know, each and every time they enter a building that is on fire. They have a lot more to fear than paper cuts.

I am wondering how many building inspectors gave their lives on 9/11/2001. There were 343 firefighters, not to mention about 100 firefighters who sacrifice their lives on the job every year.

Don't insult our firefighters by questioning their level of dedication. I think it is ignoble to try to lessen such a commendable occupation or group of people.

ROBIN McDANIEL, Phenix City

Health and help

Last spring, ABC veteran news anchor Peter Jennings shared with America that after years of smoking, he had been diagnosed with lung cancer. Jennings lost his battle at age 67.

While we mourn the death of someone as well-known as Peter Jennings, smoking takes thousands of loved ones from families right here in Georgia by causing cardiovascular disease, stroke and emphysema, as well as cancer.

Fortunately for Georgia smokers, in 2001 the Georgia Department of Human Resources (DHR) launched the Georgia Tobacco Quit Line. The Quit Line (1-877-270-STOP or 1-877-2NO-FUME for Spanish speakers) provides free counseling, a resource library, support and referral services for tobacco users ages 13 and older. Smokers have reported marked success in their efforts to go smoke-free thanks to the Quit Line. To date, more than 40,000 Georgians have called the Quit Line for help.

and cancer free by calling the Georgia Tobacco Quit Line. If not for you, do it for the people love you.

STUART T.

Director, Georgia Division of Public Health

Heartbreaking

How many times can your heart break? When I see the anguish and the terrible loss of John Sue Henderson, thoughts turn to all the other wonderful men and women who have paid the ultimate price, leaving such grief that no one those who have been there can know.

I worked with Dr. John Henderson for many years, including the time that he himself was in the Gulf War, and I saw and felt the anguish a comrade, Dr. Mark Connelly, didn't make home. I only hope that the city of Columbus continue to pray for this family, do something for John's honor, donate blood, walk that extra mile for a day, give up cigarettes, make a memorial donation.

What else can we do for this dear family? Pray for others who have lost their love ones? Pray that it will soon be over. Godspeed John; tell Mr. Henderson we miss him to this day.

JOYCE BARTLEY

Simple compassion

This is in response to a letter (Aug. 2) in which the writer claims never to have had a pet die a "death" by a vet, but lets them die a "natural" death.

As a 30-year owner and lover of many dogs, I was saddened to hear one express such callousness and utter disregard for the feelings of a family member, an animal which no doubt loved its owner completely.

This kind of mistreatment should have stopped with the advent of modern veterinary medicine. The writer seemed more concerned with getting the pet on its "last ride" than with the animal's suffering.

I have felt it necessary to have seven old dogs euthanized (the correct and nicer way) within the past two years.

I refuse to let a dog suffer. We claim to be a civilized society.

CALVIN W. WELLS

ive Phenix City officials a brea

letters have been criticizing Phenix abolishing swap time. With about swap time is that only one firefighters have used this privilege for al purposes in the past several ost of the firefighters used swap time al use or to work part-time jobs. it when they couldn't get the day off another firefighter was already d to be off for that particular day. e is a privilege and not a benefit. time that is being used is to cover nnel shortage due to three rs out on disability, three in and personnel who have to use their time before the fiscal year has

y provides all the training that rs need to perform their jobs. This firefighting, emergency medical ns, and hazardous materials. This is o expense to the firefighter. a firefighter is not cheap. There are three firefighters in training. The nt also provides training to rs so that they can prepare es for advancement. nters can obtain their degrees online, ernet. Local colleges such as ochee Valley Community College ng several courses each semester. ws anyone to pursue an education. I any school system or local business their employees time off or swap dvance their education. ty and the Firefighters Association ed heavily for Mayor Hardin and members during the last elections. r are turning on them because they t what they wanted.

MICKY HUTCHINSON
Phenix City Fire/Rescue

to firefighters

August 12 letter "Quit the griping" bashes the Phenix City firefighters ng better working conditions. The ys one of the most disgusting things ay to someone in public service: ew what the hours were when they job" and then: "Let's not forget that men hold another job . . . where earn as much money and sometimes

I imagine that if a fire broke out his

Letters

would be terribly upset if those firemen took too long to get to his house because they were too sleepy to get up and respond quickly. But if they were sleeping and had to respond to a fire, they would do it quickly and professionally, and stay as long as it took to finish the job, even if it took them late into the next day. All the while their children might be upset because they woke up and their father (or mother) was not there, even though it was their day off.

May I ask the author: Do you work two jobs to make a good living for your family? It is a shame that these firefighters must work a second job to make a living, provide health insurance and retirement, all the while protecting your family and mine.

Disagree with the "poor firemen of Phenix City" if you must. You certainly have that right. But do not insult them as you did!

BILL DENNIS, Phenix City

On the ball

Twice last week two adult men attempted to discuss my daughter's school assignment and personal information with employees at the Columbus Roberts Center. They both failed in their attempt.

The first call was handled by Karen Defenbaugh. She got as much information from him and about him as she could, but never discussed my daughter with him. She told him she could not. Then she called me to report it and offer assistance. I thanked her, and thanked God that she was so conscientious.

The second call was directed to and handled by Jennifer Allen. She too refused to discuss this matter with the brother of the first caller.

These ladies were on top of things. They were experienced and did exactly what they should have done. I am grateful for both of them and the system we have in place.

These ladies, along with all of their co-workers, are put through a wringer on a daily basis this time of the school year. The crowds, the restless kids, the angry and fussing parents, on top of the massive amount of paperwork, must be daunting

Then add to the mix the fact that they in one of the oldest, most dreary build the school system. Its design doesn't b itself well to the type of crowds they n serve.

I want people to recognize most of t citizens behind the scenes of the schoo system as good, caring caretakers of o children's welfare. If these calls had b mishandled the outcome could have b devastating.

Thank you, ladies.

N.B. HARRIS

Retail class warfare

Call me cynical, but I smell a rat in after reading the Ledger's report of pr rezoning nearby Columbus Park Cros a chain like Wal-Mart can build a supe in North Columbus where new comm businesses are bursting at their cash r seams. So far, the people of Columbus struck out getting what most of Amer enjoyed for years, namely, a one-stop discount retailer with a great superma inside.

When Hyatt describes the members council as biting their collective tongu the subject while two self-interested l introduce the routine red herrings of i for traffic studies, too much urban spr broken promises, and cries from the tree-huggers for more trees to block ti views of retail businesses, the devil ap the future details of our typical couna back-room deals.

It seems that Columbus politicians continue to exhibit their cultural penc a bit of economic white supremacy fo Columbus while Columbus South is s to be developed strictly for industrial an occasional lower class strip mail of stores and coupon-driven eateries.

The well-to-do will never want a W Supercenter in their midst and will al fight to keep the masses away from the favorite upscale establishments. Thos movers and shakers in Columbus wh always had special keys to the private of our mayor and councilors will alwa their way, and the average blue-collar citizen will never be given a voice on matters as where the city should or sl not permit construction and zoning fo stores the working class likes to shop.

JOSEPH A. BLAIR

making the attempt.

I have failed at more things than any other single person I know, but I've learned a lot of little pieces of truth about myself. This knowledge makes what has seemed to be many scorable failures turn out to be slow, unmistakable graduation.

I read an old book that said a task one faced in building a ship was not so much in the sails but how to lay the mast in order to balance the length of the wind in the sails, so as to steady the boat without it slowing down or pitching. This old story said a real test to building a fast ship was not how much sail one has, but how the ballast works out.

I've been told this is a faulty explanation of how a ship works, but I think anyone can see the old book's point. My personal knowledge of ships is based on that 245-year-old book. I've never built or sailed a ship.

I know full well that life gives one chances to have any sails. A middle-aged man has the chance to catch a lot of strong wind. Who wants to grow old without having let his sails out for all they're worth?

Having capsized more than once, I appreciate the importance of ballast. And last is what I find in my conversations with others.

I can write to David Clark at P.O.

As a citizen of Phenix City, I am concerned with the state of our public safety. I have recently been informed of a situation involving the Phenix City Fire Department.

The city manager and fire chief have ignorantly decided to do away with swap time, which allows our firefighters to further their education at local colleges. They have been told to use their vacation time to go to school. In addition, they do not even get enough vacation time to finish school.

We have firefighters who do not have a degree in fire science. They were asked to take a break from school to complete fire training and have since not been able to finish because of this ignorant move.

Swap time does not affect the budget. The firefighters do not get paid overtime for swap. In fact, the city is using more of the taxpayers' money to pay overtime to cover shifts that cannot be covered due to a shortage in staff when firefighters have to take vacation instead of swap time.

So why would there be any reason to do away with it? Why shouldn't the men and women who protect us every day be allowed to go to school and better themselves in their profession? Are the fire chief and city manager so ignorant they believe that this move will not hurt their fire department? Are they afraid of the firefighters becoming better educated than themselves?

I believe that we the tax-paying voters deserve an explanation, perhaps in writing, from those who made this decision. I also believe that the swap time should be reinstated immediately so we can be confident that the lives of our families and friends are in the hands of competent, educated men and women.

E. ROBERTS, Phenix City

Letters

90 percent of the time, firefighters are on the scene first?

Roberts would like to see this service stopped. Roberts cares nothing for the citizens' safety.

Short-staffing puts firefighters and the public safety at risk. NFPA Standard 1710 governs minimum staffing levels for fire departments. Roberts said, "Phenix City will never adopt this standard." How can three firefighters fight fire and save lives during a structure fire?

Swap time is used in every fire department across the U.S. This enables men to work for each other. When a firefighter swaps, it saves the city money. Because of Roberts' vendettas, he cut this out. This is not good management of city funds.

Ask firefighters wearing the blue shirts. Hardin attended a meeting with 30 firefighters where issues were raised. Hardin stated "help is on the way." But they have received nothing but threats of changing working hours, termination and disciplinary actions. A true leader does not lead by threats and intimidation, which is Roberts' style of leadership.

Letters appeared in this newspaper addressing these issues. An Aug. 1 meeting was held by Wallace Hunter, Hardin and Roberts were furious over the letters. The men were threatened with changing their work hours. Is this the kind of leadership that Phenix City has? If so, the citizens and firefighters will suffer.

DENNIS DUSTY, Buena Vista, Ga.

A gracious lady

What a lovely way to start the day — seeing my friend and mentor Caroline Dean's picture in the paper.

Caroline Dean is one of the most gracious, sharing people I have ever met. And how we met is quite a story itself.

I was doing research on the internet for my

One of the most incredible wildflowers I found up on my computer screen. I was over the beauty of the flowers and the info this site had to offer. I immediately with the site and told them how im with all the information and how beautiful wildflowers were photographed. I was a Georgia artist doing research and needed help. I immediately got that whatever help I needed would be available.

Be reminded, that all I knew was I wanted to help me was somewhere World Wide Web... then I got an in to visit their library and see some of that were in bloom at that time. My were "Where will I be going?" I soon Caroline Dean lived in Opelika, Ala. be going very far at all to see a plethora and reference material.

We were instant friends. I shared, I shared her expertise. What lovely de sharing our love of nature and art. I will ever forget the wonderful days Caroline Dean, truly a gracious lady her, this world is definitely a more beautiful place.

GERI

Thanks for kind gesture

I am writing this letter to say that morning of Aug. 8, I stopped my paid drive-through at the Krystal restaurant Mall. I waited for the vehicle in front away. I pulled up to the window and attendant that the person in the car paid for my breakfast and left.

I tried to find the vehicle but the driven away. Many times, officers if don't care about us at all. Then one across one of the many caring, won such as this who reside in Columbus This was a wonderful act of kindness small act, but to me it was huge. Thank you.

paying outrageous legal fees and court costs. who have sat on a jury and attempted to aine what was presented as a fact supported lence and how the law applies to the situation quite well that it's the jury that holds the lion's of the burden and responsibility for the uences of court actions.

U.S. Constitution offers little legal basis for stom of appointing lawyers to the bench. is not even a constitutional provision that a lifetime appointment to any federal bench. ally, to the contrary, our Constitution implies justice would serve a limited term of office t specifically provides that judges' nsation "... shall not be diminished during ontinuanance in office."

nk it's about time our U.S. Supreme Court is l with a representative balance of all sional elements of our society just like our ess. With nine members on the court, there surely be nine different professions that can fter the true legal interests of the American . One justice from each would suit me fine. next, let's have 15-year term limits.

JOSEPH BLAIR, Columbus

course with manners

that we have been treated to, or subjected to iding on your point of view) the non-event around the city, i.e., Bill Madison's alleged st threat made to the shout-and-pout aded monster employed by WRCG to host ie, perhaps much of the city will arrive at the of the situation: Talkline is to public rse as professional wrestling is to athletic tition; it is the Jerry Springer Show without efit of nudity.

current hosts of this long-running program progress through a single phone call without over the caller, making rapid-fire comments both intellectual merit and entertainment and reminding us of their well-held opinions, f which can withstand factual or logical y. Apparently, anything more than a few is without hearing the sounds of their own and an affirmation of their own shallow results in pathological dissolution of the self, : would seem.

is were the only public forum available to our

others, and prefers a host who listens to and considers the caller's thoughts before responding, may I recommend Russ Hollenbeck's morning show on WCGT-TV. It is an ideal forum for those who prefer to listen before speaking and the tenor of the show is as warm and comfortable as an old pair of house shoes. Drop by and join the discourse. And please, bring your manners. We have come to like it that way.

BOBBY OLDS, Columbu

Move makes no sense

As a professional educator and a concerned citizen for public safety, I think it is absurd that the city leaders in Phenix City would eliminate "swap time." I do not know much about being a firefighter, but I do know the importance of an education. If "swap time" gives our firefighters the ability to attend college and other various training opportunities to develop into better fire service professionals, it should be reinstated immediately.

An education is very important in today's world and I am sure the fire service is no different. If our city leaders are not allowing our firefighters the opportunity to seek a formal education, then they are cheating us the public out of the potential of our firefighters in developing into highly trained and qualified emergency responders.

I would like to know why our city leaders would even think it is acceptable to take away a policy that allows our firefighters to go to college, at their own expense. Is it a cost issue? If it is, I have this message for our city leaders: If you think an education is expensive, try ignorance.

At this point I am concerned as to what education level our city leaders have. Is it that they themselves are not formally educated? I would think that a city manager or fire chief would have to have at least a four-year degree and fully understand the importance of a formal education. Yet, by their actions of taking away "swap time," I would venture to say they do not. As a tax paying voter and professional educator, I want our firefighters to have the ability to advance their education as far as they desire; if the current city leaders can't resolve this public safety issue, we the voters will at election time.

CRESTA GILBERT, Phenix City

Ledger-Enquirer

Write:

Letters to the editor
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Columbus, GA 31902-0711

Fax:

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Letters must be no more than 300 words.

Include your name, address and daytime telephone number for confirmation.

All letters are subject to editing.

We reserve the right not to publish any letter.



ments and the city in order to relocate residents and demolish the buildings in the triangle. A facilities to the riverfront Housing Authority property. It will cost an estimated

P.C. Fire Dept. defends swap time decision

By Michell
O'Rourke-Cole
Journal Staff Writer
mllcoole@eastvalleymagjournal.com

The letters to the editor are coming in twos. Another one

showed up in the Ledger-Enquirer on Tuesday morning. The newspaper printing the letters is in Georgia and, according to officials who have researched the sources, the letters are coming from Columbus and Buena Vista addresses as well.

Quite honestly, the mood in Phenix City about this grand sort of frontal attack in print on the editorial page is bewildering.

The decision to eliminate "swap time" in Phenix City public safety departments-all Phenix City public safety departments-was established last January.

No one can figure out why this is an issue now or why people from Columbus seem so concerned about whether or not fire fighters in Phenix City can exchange days off with one another.

"Swap time is a privilege we had," said Capt. Mickey Hutchinson. "And it started out for education. Everybody had it. In the past several years, maybe two people have used it for education."

develop on the downtown.

Hutchinson has been with the department for 15 years.

Although he received his degree in fire science by trading a day off or two in the last semester, he says now the courses are offered online and in cooperation with Chattahoochee Valley Community College and Troy University. With the current schedule of 24-hour shifts, only certain courses are conflicting with working hours. College instructors and full-time fire fighters generally resolve course requirements.

"Mr. Tommy Hill is the fire science instructor at CVCC," said Chief Wallace Hunter. "Mr.

See Fire Page 7

During the regular scheduled meeting of the Lee County Commission, the fate of the Salem-Shotwell Bridge was discussed. John Ross from the Lee County Historical Society and members of the Opelika Kiwanis club presented proposals as to what they had in mind for the restoration of the bridge. Both groups were adamant about their ability to move the bridge to a location that would allow for everyone to see and enjoy the historical structure. However, during the meeting the Opelika Kiwanis club withdrew its proposal giving the Lee County Historical Society the opportunity to move forward with its plans. Mr. Ross, a member of the Historical Society is hoping to place the bridge in an area located at the intersection of Waverly Parkway and

area but Mr. Ross hopes to have the land donated. The Kiwanis club stated that they would be happy to step in if the plan made by Mr. Ross fell through.

In other business the commission voted 3-1-1 to award the low bid for the expansion of the Lee County Justice Center to Rabren General Contractors. Rabren General Contractors of Auburn submitted a bid of \$18.597 million. The commission also voted unanimously to go ahead with plans to ask for a lease extension for the Lee County Satellite office located in Smiths Station. The current lease will run out at the end of October and the county wishes to extend it until the end of 2005. The next meeting of the Lee County Commission will be August 29th.

We'd like to talk to you about nothing.

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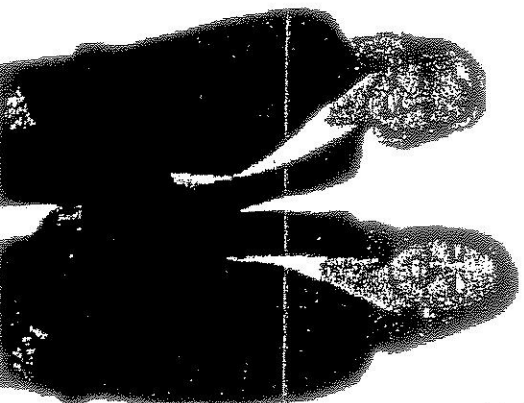
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Russell County

Continued from Page 3

most of the commissioner would be attending the annual County Commission Conference the week of August 22.

At the commission work session Commissioner Reed had Mrs. Horne-Jordan read into the minutes a proposal for a Russell County Historic Oversight Committee Board. He asked the commission to establish a "seven member board for the purpose of overseeing historic development, funding requests and historic preservation activities in Russell County." It was agreed to put it on the agenda for the commission meeting.

In the commission meeting, Commissioner Reed presented a motion to establish the board, but there were questions raised as to what exactly the board would do and what its limit of authority would be. Commissioner Martin said she was "concerned that we are creating another government level."

Commissioner Lee said there all ready was a requirement for anyone using any property or funds of the county to come before the commission for permission. After further discussion Commissioner Epps requested that the attorney review the proposal as written before they make any decision.

side of the road, which obscured the view around a curve. She said that five months ago she had meet with Commissioner Upshaw and then County Engineer Cal Markert, but the problems still existed.

She also complained that Kings Way was in serious need of grading and was a hazard to those living there because ambulance and fire service could not go down the road. The commissioners discussed the problem of county maintenance with interim County Engineer Harry Ennis.

Commissioner Epps asked the county attorney, Mr. Upshaw and Mr. Ennis to do research on the status of the road and then contact Mrs. Colbert with the results.

During the work session the commission discussed courthouse security and the need for guidelines on what would and would not be allowed in the courthouse.

In response to their request, the sheriff sent a statement to the commission meeting which read: "Warning. No weapons or ammunition allowed in the courthouse except by authorized law enforcement officers. All briefcases, purses, carrying cases, packages, etc. are subject to inspection at entrance to building. No knives of any size, razors, scissors or Leatherman

Continued from Page 3

Hill has stated that all instructors have been asked by college administrators to make every effort to work with public safety employees."

With out of state fees eliminated, public safety employees have the opportunity to earn their bachelor's and master's degree from Oklahoma State University and Memphis State. Mr. Hill is the designated processor for both universities and able to administer exams, Hunter said.

All fire fighters receive training and certification courses that are required by the Alabama Code of 1975. Phenix City pays the fees for many of the required courses and recertifications.

The memo explaining the changes in policy came on January 11 from Chief Jerry Prater.

"This is due to Workman

ilities created for the City of Phenix City," the memo says.

In at least one case, a lawsuit was generated that involved "swap time." City officials say one of the authors of one of the "letters to the editor," Dennis Duty, brought the suit and has recently lost his bid for disability compensation from the city.

On June 15, Duty also lost a lawsuit that began in 1998 with a fire at Phenix Lumber. A jury found his claims against the city unsupported. Duty worked as a fire fighter until 2001 and was dismissed by the city. He has since sought workman's compensation insurance for a medical disability that reportedly occurred while on "swap time."

His cases against the city regarding his dismissal, his First Amendment rights and other claims have been dismissed. The city has been found in court to be without fault. Phenix City is not responsible for any compensation concern-

agreements.

To Mickey Hutchins "swap time" is a non-issue as he says, it is not a problem with nearly all of the 50-plus men and women "on the job" Phenix City.

"I know ahead of time what time off I need," he said. "don't worry about it. With the budget crunches and revenue for the city going down, we can't lose a position."

Chief Hunter says the fire department is mostly "grateful." New equipment is supplied and updated frequent Promotions are ongoing. Fire crew, their training and the gear are "second to none."

"The City of Phenix City helps us out whenever we need it," said Hunter. "They have bent over backwards so that we can provide proven service for the people of Phenix City. Every fire fighter here needs to have an attitude filled with gratitude."

C. S. Burton, Inc. aka
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September 20, 2005

To whom it may concern,

On Tuesday September 13, 2005, on my off duty day and acting as President of the Phenix City Firefighters Association, Local-3668, I meet with and gave an interview with the local media on issues of the Phenix City Firefighters Association.

Respectively,



David P. Davis, Sergeant

